

February 5, 2010

Dear Mr. Rock,

Immediately following the Chalking Day festivities of last Wednesday, Feb. 3, the Student Chalkers of the University of Ottawa (SCUO) invited you to read the messages left by students on the freedom of expression walls at Morisset Library. We also invited you to contribute your own message, in the spirit of freedom of expression.

We did not ask you to take over the entire area with posters portraying your own self-serving messages and in the process cover up and negate all of the ideas put forward by the student community.

The morning following Chalking Day, we and other participants were shocked to discover that you had unilaterally decided to bolt high-tech anti-graffiti posters over all of the freedom of expression walls. These aluminum-backed laminated posters are held up by about 160 screws drilled into and thereby degrading the concrete. You will notice, as you walk past the posters, that you will want to keep yourself well away from the surface of the walls to prevent injury from the screw heads that protrude. Be especially careful at times when the passage-way becomes crowded, such as at class changeover times.

These facts considered, we understand from conversations with the external company hired to install the posters, Bungee Banner, that the new anti-graffiti coating allows paint and paste to be easily cleaned off without damaging the poster surface. This fortunate upgrade to the freedom of expression walls will now allow student message sharing to be much more dynamic and up-to-date. Like whiteboards or blackboards in the classroom, students will now have access to an effective communication forum on the walls of the library. This will surely enrich the mental landscape of our campus.

Thank you for this new investment in student freedom of expression. We look forward to communicating with you on the library walls, but in the future please do not bolt or fasten coverings overtop of our expression in any way, and consider consulting us before spending our tuition money on control technology.

Sincerely,

Student Chalkers of the University of Ottawa (SCUO)